

Mimulus Memo



JUNE 2013

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EVENTS

JUNE

- 1 — Field Trip: Saddle Springs
- 20 — Meeting: Plant ID, 6pm
Program, 7pm

JULY

- 13 — Field Trip: Mt . Pinos,
Los Padres N F

SEPTEMBER

- 19 — Meeting: Plant ID, 6 pm
Program, 7 pm

OCTOBER

- 26 — Plant Sale

Welcome to the Reorganized Kern CNPS *New field trips, gardening tips and programs*

by Paul Gipe

THANKS TO THE EFFORTS OF COMMITTED VOLUNTEERS, THE Kern chapter of CNPS has successfully reorganized. This spring we re-launched our field trips, newsletter, and regular monthly programs, as well as updated our web site.

As the adage says, many hands make light work. Kern CNPS members have pitched in — doing whatever needs to be done — breathing new life into the group.

Our experienced botanists, including **Mark Faull, Ellen Cypher, Dave Clendenen, Denis Kearns, Rich Spjut, Lucy Clark, and Clyde Golden** have led several fascinating field trips both here and outside the region. And despite the devastating lack of rain this spring, there have been ample flowering plants, trees, and shrubs for us to enjoy.

Note that we will take July and August off, but resume our regular programs in the fall on the third Thursday of the month, beginning with Tehachapi's **Jon Hammond** on oaks. See the calendar for details.

So, come join us, see what we're up to and learn how you can help. If you'd like to know more, contact one of the officers listed on last page.



Photo: Djuali Campbell

Dave Clendenen leads a Kern Chapter CNPS field trip at Wind Wolves.

The California Native Plant Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of California native plants and their natural habitats, and to increasing the understanding, appreciation, and horticultural use of native plants.

I Hate to Prune

by Monica Tudor

I LIKE TO PUTTER BUT HATE TO PRUNE MY garden. It seems like there is always a reason to postpone the task. The sages are blooming and I don't want to take off the flowers. The early butterflies take shelter amongst the branches and I don't want to disturb them. I don't want to trim off any

It seems like there is always a reason to postpone the task.

butterfly eggs that might have been laid; it's too hot; it's too cold; and so on. But it needs to be done. Just so you know, spring is not the best time to prune. It is usually done fall to mid-winter.

That disclaimer aside, this spring the sages were taking over the garden. Some had been trimmed in past years, but some had never been trimmed and at least one path was completely hidden by the

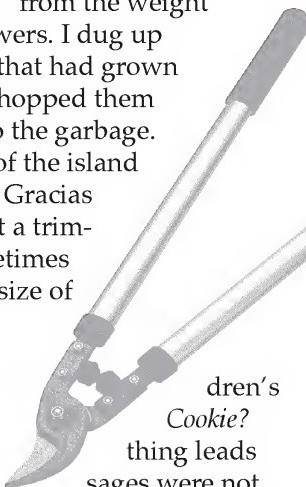
overgrown foliage. I felt the need to trim now, so armed with my tools, began the project. First I pulled out any dead stems, using loppers to get the larger branches. Then I went for shape, shortening the branches so they would not split from the weight



Before pruning, when the wind knocked down the mesquite.

of the spring growth and flowers. I dug up two large Whirly Blue sages that had grown to gargantuan proportions, chopped them into pieces and put them into the garbage. There! Now the path on top of the island was visible again. The Salvia Gracias was also taking over, so it got a trimming, too. (Note to self: sometimes the labels underestimate the size of the plant!)

Have you ever read the children's book, *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie?* It's a cute story of how one thing leads to another. Now that the covering everything, the rest of the garden looked a little, how shall I say, needy? I pulled up or cut off the California poppies and took the shears to the Lipstick salvias. The buckwheat in the shade of the Palo Verde tree was getting out of hand, so it got whacked back, too. I still need to prune, trim, or pull a volunteer sage that decided to grow in a less than ideal spot. And the Texas Rangers could use some shaping. But that



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has to wait till later. Right now I'm still recovering from the mess that the recent windstorms made of the mesquite tree. The whole top of the tree was leaning on the ground. I had to prop it up with supports, tie it with rope to get it to stay upright, and then pruned the heck out of it. No power tools were used, just loppers and a pruning saw. The mesquite now stands

upright, looking a little like it got a major haircut.



Showing the cleared path.

Before it gets too hot, I'll make a trip to the nursery to see if there are any Winnifred Gilman sages that need to come home with me. I like Winnifred, since she is well mannered and has beautiful flower shish-ka-bobs.

Well, by now you should know that a garden (my

garden, anyway) is a work in progress. So I'll keep on planting natives and tweaking, and pruning when I have to. And when once in a while there's nothing to do in the garden, just enjoy!

For more information about pruning, I recommend "Care & Maintenance of Southern California Native Plant Gardens," by Bart O'Brien, Betsey Landis and Ellen Mackey.

It has all kinds of great information and is available through our CNPS chapter.

For readers desiring a tour of my garden, I have a few dates available. Please contact me in advance at dosportas@msn.com or 661 808 8387



Mesquite tree - propped, supported, tied and pruned!

Katharine Brandegee: A Woman Ahead of Her Time

by Nancy Nies

ON ONE OF THE EXCELLENT FIELD TRIPS OUR chapter has sponsored this spring, the May 4 trip with Lucy Clark and Clyde Golden to the Cedar Creek area, we saw the rare *Fritillaria brandegeei* (Greenhorn fritillary), the species named for **Katharine Layne Curran Brandegee** (1844-1920). Though the flowers were past their prime, what we saw of the fritillary — and Clyde's beautiful photos of it on the Calflora website — inspired me to return next year to see it in bloom. Similarly, when Lucy told me a little of the remarkable woman for whom it was named, I was inspired to find out more about her.

Katharine was born in Tennessee, but her family moved west, settling near Folsom, California. Katharine taught school, and at the age of 22 married Hugh Curran, a constable. Widowed after eight years of marriage, Katharine went to San Francisco to attend medical school. This was a bold move. Female medical students had a hard life at the time, but Katharine persevered, receiving her M.D. degree in 1878.

The pharmacological courses Katharine took as a medical student sparked an interest in natural history. Her work impressed a professor, **Hans Herman Behr**, who trained her in botanical work. Finding it difficult to establish a medical practice, Katharine worked at the herbarium of the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. Katharine founded and produced the Academy's bulletin, but was given the title of "acting editor," since it was unseemly for a woman to be editor of a scientific journal. Nevertheless, her journal gave West Coast botanists a place to publish their findings, and earned respect

... she was not averse to conflict, criticizing poor plant descriptions and fighting the idea that East Coast science was superior.

for Katharine. Unlike most women scientists of her time, who tried not to make waves, she was not averse to conflict, criticizing poor plant descriptions and fighting the idea that East Coast science was superior.



Photo: Hunt Institute Archives

Katharine Brandegee (1844-1920)

When Katharine met **Townshend Stith Brandegee** (1843-1925), a civil engineer-turned-botanist, it seems that she met her soul-mate. Well-suited, they would accomplish their most important work together. They were married in 1889, and spent their honeymoon walking from San Diego to San Francisco collecting plant specimens.

The next year Katharine founded *Zoe*, a private scientific journal, but under her husband's name — it was funded by his inheritance, but also benefited from the "credibility" of a man's name. In *Zoe*, "unladylike" Katharine railed against "bad science," refuted anti-Darwinism, and promoted exacting standards for describing and identifying plants.

Katharine made numerous plant-collecting trips throughout the West, with and without her husband. She spent weeks at a time in the Sierra, even camping alone at 10,000 feet. It is said that on a trip to Baja California with her husband, she (shockingly?) rode astride her mule rather than side-saddle, and wore pantaloons and leggings. She was known to dress unconventionally, not for style but for comfort.

Between 1894 and 1906, the Brandegees lived in San Diego, where they continued their plant study, built a herbarium, and created the city's first botanical gardens. In 1906 they would move back to Berkeley and donate their world-class plant collection, as well as their botanical library, to the University of California.

Soon after their marriage, the Brandegees had met and encouraged **Alice Eastwood** (1859-1953), an enthusiastic young teacher

who wanted to do botanical writing. Katharine had arranged for Alice to work at the Academy's herbarium and for her own salary to be paid to Alice. In doing so, she had set Alice on the path to becoming a renowned botanist in her own right. Alice would, in 1908, name a rare plant she found growing in the Greenhorn Mountains after a rare woman—her mentor, Katharine Brandegee—calling it *Fritillaria brandegeei*.



Fritillaria brandegeei —
Greenhorn fritillary

Gardening with Native Plants

Plant milkweed and help a butterfly

by Sasha Honig

WE ALL LOVE TO SEE BUTTERFLIES IN OUR gardens and the king of them all is the aptly-named monarch butterfly.

Monarchs winter in Mexico but fly north where they



Monarch on Baccharis

must locate milkweeds to feed and breed. The caterpillars eat nothing but milkweed, although adults may nectar on other plants, such as this native *Baccharis emoryii* (as here at Panorama Vista Preserve).

Unfortunately, the Monarch population is crashing due to crises on both ends of the migration route.

On the Mexican end, in the forests of the Michoacan mountains, not only is deforestation a problem but unusual cold weather has taken its toll; one bad freeze left monarch carcasses 3 feet deep on the forest floor. (See <http://www.monarchwatch.org/news/021102.html> for one report.) An informative online site about the monarch's migration patterns and threats to the butterflies' continued existence is **The Monarch Butterfly Fund Conserving the Migration**.

On the U.S. end, the problem is in the increasing scarcity of milkweed.

The availability of milkweed in the US has declined sharply due to lavish use of herbicides by farmers, spraying and mowing of roadside plants, and urbanization.

The monarchs are being knocked out by a one-two punch on either end of the migration route.

Purple milkweed — *Asclepias cordifolia*

Photo by Dinah Campbell



On the US end, home gardeners may be able

to help. Monarch experts say that planting of milkweed might mitigate the growing shortage of these plants in the wild.

The milkweeds need not be California natives as witness this plant in our front yard, which is hosting two caterpillars this year; this is perhaps a type of *Asclepias tuberosa*, not a native, but CNPS members might prefer California native plants. A resource for information on monarchs and California milkweeds is the **Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation**.

According to the Xerces Society website, milkweeds native to California whose range includes Kern County include:

- Narrow-leaved milkweed (*Asclepias fascicularis*)
- California milkweed (*Asclepias californica*)
- Woollypod milkweed (*Asclepias eriocarpa*)
- Woolly milkweed (*Asclepias vestita*)

(Source: <http://www.xerces.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/xerces-nrcs-california-milkweed-guide.pdf>)

Of these, the *A. fascicularis* is the most widespread and most often used in revegetation projects. It has been spotted at Panorama Vista Preserve, although it is scarce at present.



Xerces lists sources for milkweed seed:

Hedgerow Farms, Winters, CA; 530-662 6847

www.hedgerowfarms.com

S&S Seeds, Carpinteria, CA; 805-684 0436

www.ssseeds.com

Pacific Coast Seed, Livermore, CA; 925-373 4417

www.pcseed.com

Sierra Seed Supply, Greenville, CA; 530-284 7926

sierraseedsupply.com/

More information on using California native milkweeds for habitat restoration can be had by contacting **Brianna Borders** at 503-232 6639 or brianna@xerces.org.

Milkweeds afford monarchs some protection from predation. Birds do not find monarchs palatable, and they will even make birds throw up. (Google "barfing blue jay" if you want to see for yourself.)

Some years ago, Andy and I were fortunate enough to travel to one of the monarch wintering sites in Mexico; we hiked up the mountain very early while it was still cool and barely light, then sat silently among the trees waiting for the butterflies to wake up. As the sun warmed them, they began to flutter about and soon the only sound we could hear in the forest was the gentle rustle of their wings. That — and in the far distance — the sound of a chain saw.

Chapter Meetings upcoming TOPICS

Thursday, June 20, 2013 - 7 pm:

Pam DeVries "A Botanical Tour of the San Emigdio Mountains Region of California"
This will be a good preview of our field trip scheduled for July 13th – a hike to the summit of Mt. Pinos in the Los Padres Nat'l. Forest.

July, August: NO MEETINGS

Thursday, September 19, 2013 - 7pm

Jon Hammond, an expert on California oaks, will speak.

Thursday, October 17, 2013 - 7pm: TBA

Thursday, November 21, 2013 - 7pm: TBA

December: NO MEETING

All chapter meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of each month, except as noted above, at the Hall Ambulance Community Room

1031 21st Street (21st & N St.),
Bakersfield, CA.

Meeting times:

6 pm — Plant keying and identification
7 pm — Program presentation



Field Trip Moments —



Photo: Nancy Nies

Red Rock Canyon field trip with **Mark Faull**. The creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*) ring in this photo is estimated to be 6 thousand years old.

Resources:

EVER wonder what some of those Latin and Greek names mean? **Clyde Golden** recommends the following site to help you find out:

www.calflora.net/botanicalnames/index2.html

WANT more native-plant gardening tips? **Shasha Honig** likes: wildsuburbia.blogspot.com

GOING to be in or near Colorado in July? Drop in at the **Crested Butte Wildflower Festival, July 8-14**. Events are to be listed here: www.crestedbutterwildflowerfestival.com

INTERESTED in a **3-Day Cruise to the Channel Islands**

— Santa Cruz, Santa Rosa and San Miguel — with opportunities for wildlife and wildflower-viewing, along with hiking, snorkeling and kayaking? Sierra Club leader, Joan Holtz leads cruises **June 2 - 4, July 21 - 23, August 25 - 27** and **September 15 - 17**. Cost, \$590, includes an assigned bunk on the boat, all meals, snacks and beverages and includes the services of a ranger/naturalist guide. Contact: **Joan Jones Holtz**, jholtzlin@aol.com; **626-443-0706**

CONCERNED about the future of **Saddleback Butte State Park**? Donations will be matched by the State of California. You may donate at: www.savesaddleback.org

SISKYOU Field Institute in Selma, OR offers numerous courses in botany plus a Naturalist Certification program. While their offerings pertain naturally to So. Oregon, there are many classes of general interest.

www.thefi.org



Photo: Nancy Nies

Woodland trees and shrubs field trip with **Richard Sjput**. Participants were checking out the *Eriodictyon californicum* (Yerba santa) along Old Kern Canyon Road.

FIELD TRIPS

KERN CNPS FIELD TRIPS are open to all. Occasionally, numbers will be limited by the land owners or agencies. We welcome you to join us to see and learn about our native plants and their habitats, to learn to identify plants, or to photograph them. If you are skilled in plant identification, you can help us all learn.

Please always dress in layers, wear boots or shoes you can hike in and bring food and water. You may also want to bring a hat, sunscreen, binoculars, camera, plant lists and useful references such as *Kern County Flora* and the *Jepson Manual*, or any book you like. We try to meet at a spot where we can park some cars and carpool to our location to save the air, the gas, the money and make sure that on a "roadside" trip that we will have adequate space to park. CNPS does not arrange car pools; each person does so at the meeting place.

All trips are by reservation only, so we know whom to expect, and how many will be attending each field trip. Each trip will have the contact person listed.

Please e-mail the contact person by two days before the field trip and indicate the names of those who will attend.



IMPORTANT: *If your or your party's plans change and you will not be attending, it is critical - for safety, planning and courtesy reasons - that you call or e-mail the contact person and let him/her know you will not be there.*

June 1, Saturday, 7:45 am

SADDLE SPRINGS RD. -

PIUTE MOUNTAINS

with Alison Sheehey

Contact: Lucy Clark - lucyg391@gmail.com

RSVP Deadline:

8 pm, May 30, 2013

Please join us for the first-in-memory trip to the Piutes with **Nature Ali** herself as our guide. We will take Saddle Springs Road, which leads through grassland, chaparral, pinyon-juniper woodland (the burnt remnants of the Piute Cypress Botanical Area), and ponderosa/Jeffrey pine forest. Ali reports the temp drops about 20 degrees along the trip, as we go up to Piute Peak! The entire roadside along the 15 miles of travel is worthy of botanizing. Birds and butterflies are a bonus. Rare plants along the route include the *Streptanthus cordatus var piutensis* (Piute jewel flower); *Eriogonum breedlovei var breedlovei* (Piute buckwheat); *Delphinium inopinum* (unexpected larkspur); *Hesperocyclis nevadensis* (Piute cypress); *Calochortus palmeri* (Palmer's mariposa lily) and *Perideridia pringlei* (adobe yampah). This will be an all-day trip, with lunch along the road, and a stop in Brown's meadow, where there are port-a-potties, and maybe the lily. There is no potable water, so bring plenty!

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Learn more about the area at this link. <http://www.natureali.org/SQF/cypress.html>

Saddle Springs Road turns off Bodfish-Caliente Road (Lake Isabella Blvd). It is a rough narrow road that has few turnouts, so carpooling is mandatory. High-clearance vehicles are required.

For carpooling from Bakersfield, please meet at 'Tuesday Morning' at the corner of Auburn and Fairfax at 7:40 am. We leave before 8 am to meet with others in Isabella.

From either the east or west, take Highway 178 to the Bodfish exit, Elizabeth Norris Rd., and turn right. Drive to Lake Isabella Blvd. Participants should rendezvous in the Von's parking lot by 8:45am, with hopes of leaving by 9am.

For those from Tehachapi or points south: Take Caliente-Bodfish road north off of HWY 58. The turnoff to Saddle Springs is ~3 miles southwest of the town of Bodfish. It is on a blind curve. There are several wide areas where 3-5 cars can pull out, but they are few and far between. The rest of us should arrive shortly after 9, so please be parked near the turnoff to Saddle Springs Road by 9:10 am. Lucy will help folks from other areas make contact for carpooling if you wish.

Please RSVP by deadline to contact listed above. If you have a high-clearance vehicle and will bring it, please let contact know, so we can provide a ride for all who want to join us.

July 13th, Saturday, 8:00 am

MT. PINOS — LOS PADRES NATIONAL FOREST
with Pam DeVries

Contact: Patty Gradek - pattygradek@gmail.com

RSVP Deadline: **8 pm, July 11, 2013**

Fellow Chapter member **Pam DeVries** will host our mid-summer field trip to the summit of Mt. Pinos in the Los Padres National Forest. (*Ed note: Please see Program description for June 20th*) It's a beautiful place any time of the year but should be in full flower in July, at over 8,000 feet in elevation. We will drive to the parking lot where the trail to the summit starts. There are port-a-potties at the parking lot. For those who don't want to hike, there are

some wet meadow habitats around the parking lot to explore. The hike to the summit is a slow and easy walk. In the 1.5 miles to the summit, one passes through conifer forest habitats and finds a sub-alpine habitat at the top. There is a huge variety of unusual plants on the hike and a spectacular view at the summit. Bring your binoculars, since condors are sometimes spotted from the summit. Much of the higher reaches of the mountain are included in the Chumash Wilderness and there is a botanical preserve designated at the summit.

Our host, Pam DeVries, has written a field guide, which includes the area we are visiting, titled *The Plants of the San Emigdio Region of California*. It is available through Amazon or the CNPS bookstore online. Pam will be the speaker at our meeting on June 20th and we expect that will be an excellent preview for the field trip.

Please meet at the Park & Ride lot at the corner of Real Road and Stockdale Highway at 8:00 am to carpool. We will leave by 8:15 am. We will drive south on I-5 and take the Frazier Mountain Park Road exit. Follow the signs to Mt. Pinos and the large parking lot at the end of the road. This will be a full-day trip. Please RSVP by deadline to contact listed above.

Field trips can also be found at
kern.cnps.org/field-trips/upcoming-field-trips

PRINT OR SAVE THESE DATES TO YOUR CALENDAR!

The "Catch-A-Bloom" Mailing List

IT'S IN THE NATURE OF WILDFLOWER BLOOM to be somewhat unpredictable. For that reason we've compiled an e-mail list of those who are interested in receiving **alerts** about spur-of-the-moment excursions, when we hear that a bloom is occurring somewhere, and we plan to catch a look before it passes. To sign up for "*Catch-A-Bloom*" e-mail Lucy at lucyg391@gmail.com or Patty at pattygradek@gmail.com, putting "Catch-A-Bloom List" in the subject line.

Similarly, you can alert us to special areas of bloom

Thank you to:

...all of the field trip leaders and program speakers these past few months:

Mark Faull for the extensive and fascinating field trip to Red Rock Canyon State Park
Ellen Cypher for a very enjoyable field trip to Sand Ridge

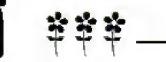
Denis Kearns for the field trip and "BioBlitz" at the beautiful BLM area at the San Joaquin River Gorge

Richard Sjut for the very informative field trip to see Desert and Woodland Trees and Shrubs

Lucy Clark and **Clyde Golden** for the Annual Visit to beautiful Cedar Creek and the field trip to the Top of Rancheria Road

Dave Clendenen for his excellent presentation at the May meeting AND the field trip to the high country at the Wind Wolves Preserve

It's been a dry spring and not very good for wildflowers but each of the field trips has been an excellent natural history tour and we had a chance to see many plants, and birds and to learn the history of the places we visited. It was also very enjoyable to spend time with other plant enthusiasts!



that you happen to see in your day-to-day ventures. If you are planning a flowering trip on short notice and would welcome fellow CNPS members to join you, please e-mail the information to Lucy and Patty at lucyg391@gmail.com and pattygradek@gmail.com and we'll get the word out. Please send us:

- Location of the field trip
- Date and meeting time
- Your name and e-mail address
- Any other information you want to include

Contacts:

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CALIFORNIA
NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

The Kern Chapter of the California Native Plant Society meets the third Thursday of each month at Hall Ambulance Community Room,
1013 21st St. (21st & N St), Bakersfield, CA. Chapter Website: [kern.cnps.org](http:// kern.cnps.org)

The California Native Plant Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the conservation of California's native plants and their natural habitats, and to increasing the understanding, appreciation, and horticultural use of native plants. CNPS has 31 chapters throughout the state and membership is open to all persons, professional and amateur, with an interest in California's native plants. Members have diverse interests including natural history, botany, ecology, conservation, photography, drawing, hiking and gardening. As a Kern County resident, your membership includes Fremontia, a quarterly journal with articles on all aspects of native plants; The Bulletin, a statewide report of activities and schedules; and The Mimulus Memo, the newsletter of the Kern Chapter.

Join CNPS or renew your membership online at www.cnps.org.

Student/Limited Income – \$25
Individual – \$45
Family or Library – \$75



METTING PLACE, DATES & TOPICS
BOTANIST OF NOTE
NATIVE-PLANT GARDENING
SUMMER FIELD TRIP DATES & DESCRIPTIONS



Mimulus Memo

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